

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /079 W

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P R 281629Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4739

INFO AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPETOWN

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

S E C R E T FREETOWN 0348

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR RH SL

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH REV. SITHOLE

REF: FREETOWN 0306 (NOTAL)

1. REV. SITHOLE CALLED ON ME JANUARY 27 AFTER SEEING FOREIGN MINISTER MINAH. HE SAID THAT MINAH HAD BEEN CORDIAL BUT CLEARLY EMBARRASSED DURING CONVERSATION. SITHOLE SAID HE PRESENTED A LOGICAL EXPLANATION OF THE NEED FOR OAU TO SUPPORT INCLUSION

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OF ALL PARTIES IN NEGOTIATING PROCESS RATHER THAN SINGLING OUT ANY ONE OR GROUP OF PARTIES. HE ASSURED MINAH THAT PEACE WAS IMPOSSIBLE IN FUTURE IF ZANU NOT INCLUDED IN NEGOTIATIONS. SITHOLE SAID THAT MINAH SEEMED IMPRESSED WITH THE RATIONALITY OF HIS APPROACH BUT MADE NO MOVE TO BACK AWAY FROM SUPPORT FOR POSITION OF FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS.

2. SITHOLE HAS DELAYED DEPARTURE FROM FREETOWN IN HOPES OF SEEING PRESIDENT STEVENS. SO FAR STEVENS HAS NOT AGREED TO SEE SITHOLE. THIS IS OBVIOUS SLIGHT, SINCE STEVENS IS NOT A DIFFICULT PERSON TO GET TO SEE AT PRESENT TIME.

3. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION BY ME AS TO POSSIBILITY OF HIS BEING INCLUDED ON NEGOTIATIONS MENTIONED BY SMITH IN HIS "INTERNAL SOLUTION," SITHOLE STRONGLY DENIED ANY INTEREST ON HIS OWN PART OR ON THE PART OF ZANU IN NEGOTIATING SEPARATELY. HE FURTHER DECLARED THAT THE ONLY SOLUTION FOR AN INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE WAS ONE THAT WAS ARRIVED AT OPENLY AND HONESTLY, I.E. THROUGH THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.

4. SITHOLE VISIT HAS CAUSED SOME EMBARRASSMENT TO THE GOSL. OFFICIAL MEDIA HAS UNDERGONE SOME STRESS, SINCE EDITOR OF GOVERNMENT OWNED "DAILY MAIL" CONDUCTED PUBLIC INTERVIEW OF SITHOLE WITHOUT GAINING GOSL CLEARANCE. RESULT HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE FRICTION AMONG THE PEOPLE IN THE INFORMATION SECTOR.

5. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. GOVERNMENT OWNED RADIO STATION GAVE FOLLOWING SUMMARY OF SITHOLE MEETING WITH FONMIN MINAH:

QUOTE. THE DECISION OF THE FRONT LINE STATES ON THE ZIMBABWE ISSUE IMPINGES ON THE STATUS OF AFRICA.

THIS WAS THE VIEW EXPRESSED BY REVEREND NDABANINGI SITHOLE WHEN HE CALLED ON THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MR. FRANCIS MINAH TODAY.

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REV. SITHOLE SAID THAT THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE FEEL STRONGLY ABOUT THE DECISION, WHICH WILL DIVIDE THE PEOPLE AND INEVITABLY LEAD TO ANOTHER ANGOLAN TYPE SITUATION.

THE DECISION, HE WENT ON, DIVIDES THE OAU ITSELF, AND HE CALLED ON THE ORGANIZATION TO SHELVE THE ISSUE.

REVEREND SITHOLE ADDED THAT IT IS AN EFFORT TO PREDETERMINE THE LEADERSHIP AND AN INTERFERENCE INTO THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF ZIMBABWE.

MR. FRANCIS MINAH SAID OAU HAS SHELVED THE ISSUE FOR A LONG TIME AND THAT THE INTRANSIGENCE OF IAN SMITH HAS CONTINUED BECAUSE OF THE DIVISION AMONG THE AFRICAN NATIONALISTS.

THE FOREIGN MINISTER REFERRED TO A CALL MADE BY PRESIDENT SIAKA STEVENS TO NATIONALIST LEADERS TO SHOW MATURITY OF MIND AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.

MR. MINAH SAID THAT GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN CONCERNED OVER THE ATROCITIES IN ZIMBABWE AND THE CONSENSUS OF OPINION WAS THAT THE REBEL REGIME OF SMITH SHOULD BE BROUGHT DOWN.

BUT, THE MINISTER WENT ON, MUCH TO OUR REGRET, TIME HAS BEEN WASTED BECAUSE THERE IS NO UNITY AMONG THE AFRICAN NATIONALISTS OF ZIMBABWE. HE MENTIONED VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH SIERRA LEONE IS HELPING WITH SCHOLARSHIPS AND NOTED THAT A SIERRA LEONEAN, MR. JUSTICE KUTUBU SERVED ON THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION WHICH INVESTIGATED THE DEATH OF HERBERT CHITEPO.

REV. SITHOLE ASKED THE MINISTER TO CONVEY THE APPRECIATION OF THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE FOR ALL THE ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO THEM. UNQUOTE. END UNCLASSIFIED. SAMUELS

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NNN

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